strategies in a manner consistent with the liberalised economy and competitive environment in the international market. As a part of its diversification of trade activities in the changed business scenario, STC is laying greater emphasis on developing non-canalised trade by way of :

- direct buying and selling;
- development of captive supply sources
- through joint ventures and financial assistance;
- sale of edible oils in STC's own brand name;
- strengthening overseas marketing network and warehousing;
- development of Port infrastructure in the country;
- contemplated plan to import gold and export gold jewellery.

As a result of efforts made by STC to increase non-canalised trade, STC's total turnover on its own account has been consistently increasing as per details given below :

(Rs. in crores)

	Exports	Imports	Domestic	Total
1993-94	363	68	80	511
1994-95	429	42	90	561
1995-96	548	143	78	769

Delicensing of Electronic Goods

*330. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have approved a proposal to delicense the entertainment electronic goods like Television and VCR etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the items to be delicensed;

(c) the impact on the industrial growth after delicensing the above items;

(d) whether the Governmet has any proposal to delicence other items which are under compulsory licensing in near future; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. All items of entertainment electronic industry stand delicensed.

(c) Delicensing of any industry implies that the entrepreneur is free to take investment and technology decisions which would contribute to greater industrail growth. However, since industrail growth depends inter-alia on various factors affecting the demand and supply of the industrial sector, the effect of delicensing of any sector can be assessed only with a time lag accounting for the gestation period in putting up an industry.

(d) and (e). Review of delicensing of industries is a continuous process.

[Translation]

Production Cost

*331. SHRI NITISH KUMAR :
SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Union Government has been drawn to the newsitem appeared in 'Times of India' dated November 14, 1996 under the caption "Production costs are not low in India";

(b) whether productivity and general production costs in India are high despite the availability of cheaper labour;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the cost of raw material and other components are 130% higher in India as compared to the country like Germany; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken by the Government to reduce the cost of production?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e). This is not universally true as is borne out by studies conducted by Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices on a range of products and industries. Even the concerned Report recognises the fact that lower costs obtain in certain industries in India.

Scheme for SSI Units

*332. KUMARI UMA BHARATI :
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Small Industries Development Bank of India has formulated any comprehensive scheme for the marketing of the goods manufactured in the small scale industrial sector; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Scheme provides for financial assistance in the form of loan to SSI units existing as well as new and corporate entities. The Corporate entities providing infrastructure, support services etc. to SSI units are also eligible for assistance. The amount of loan sanctioned is need based but not normally below Rs. 10 lakhs per borrower. The repayment of loan varies from 3 to 8 years with moratorium of 1 year. The interest is fixed in a broad band upto 4% above the prime lending rate.